DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 146 860 HE 009 426

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TITLE Admissions Procedures at Plymouth. A Background Study and Report.
INSTITUTION Plymouth State Coll., N.H.
PUB DATE [76]
NOTE 45p.; Some tables may not reproduce well

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Policy; *Admission Criteria; Admissions Counselors; College Administration; *College Admission; *Enrollment Rate; Higher Education; Policy Formation; School Size; Small Colleges; *State Colleges; *Student Application

ABSTRACT

Admissions data and procedures are presented and analyzed to point out some of the salient aspects of the admissions operation for the benefit of faculty. Of concern are the past, present, and future admissions conditions. A possible result of the study is that admissions officers at the college are giving applicants more careful attention and the opportunity to present many different kinds of evidence in support of their applications. A number of recommendations are made based on the study's results. Data are presented on growth rates and optimum college size, student qualifications, the applicant pool, and the denials and enrollments. Plymouth State College is a small college within the University of New Hampshire system. (MSE)

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ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES AT PLYMOUTH

A Background Study and Report

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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INTRODUCTION

The intent of this report from the Admissions Policy Committee is to point out some of the salient aspects of the admissions picture at Plymouth in an effort to educate faculty about where we have been, where we are, and perhaps where we may be going. The latter is stated tentatively because predicting the future is, at best, a precarious occupation. We hope, however, that the information in this report will help faculty make educated suggestions about what directions they feel the institution should pursue in its admissions policy.

We wish to commend the Admissions Office for its cooperation in the preparation of this report. As a result of this study, the committee feels that students applying to Plymouth are receiving careful attention from the admissions officers and are being given ample opportunity to present as many different kinds of evidence as possible to support their applications.

As a part of this report, the Committee has made a number of recommendations. These are based upon information gathered for this report and represent our thinking at this time. We have found that the entire admissions picture is a complex one, and we are, admittedly, still learning about it.

We hope that by publishing this report we can begin an open and meaningful dialogue among faculty about an aspect of the college which has direct impact upon practically all facets of its operation. All members of this committee welcome suggestions from faculty and administrators about admissions policy.

THE ADMISSIONS POLICY COMMITTEE

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ADMISSIONS PROFILE--SOME CONSIDERATIONS AND FACTS

Growth

At various points in the history of Plymouth State College questions have been raised about its rate of growth, the advisability of remaining a "small" college, and its relationship to the state's needs for higher education facilities and opportunities.

When one discusses growth and admissions figures, careful distinctions must be made so that everyone understands how certain figures are being used. For example, if we examine undergraduate enrollment and then total enrollment figures for the college--those which include graduate students and part-time students--we get the following picture:

Year	Undergraduate Enrollment	Total Enrollment
1967-1968	1486	1848
1968-1969	1631	1967
1969-1970	1907	2305
1970-1971	2030	2472
1971-1972	2245	2637
1972-1973	2393	2641
1973-1974	2419	2711
1974-1975	2451	2857
1975-1976	2568	3014

These figures show that from 1967-1972 there was a marked increase in undergraduate enrollments with a corresponding increase in total enrollment. Since 1972, the rate of growth has slowed somewhat in the undergraduate enrollment while total enrollment has maintained a fairly stable growth rate. No one has yet determined the optimum size for Plymouth but as this report indicates in the following pages, certain factors must be taken into consideration whenever projections about growth are being made and some of these factors may have increasing weight as projections are made for the next ten years.

Examining the growth rate through freshman admissions reveals the following picture:

Year	Applied Res.	Applied N-r	Denied Res.	Denied N-r	Total Enrolled
1974-1975	720	749	2	129	760
1975-1976	730	775	5	106	805
1976-1977	865	875	3	251	808

It should be noted that there is almost always a difference between the number of students actually admitted and the number who actually enroll. Admissions people have to take this into consideration when making their decisions about the number of students to admit. (See Tables 1 & 2 at the end of this report.)

Qualifications

Increasing concern is being expressed throughout the country as to the quality of students attending institutions of higher learning. Reports of a drop in SAT scores are well documented; offerings of remedial courses are becoming wide-spread, not only at public colleges and universities but also at private ones. With this as a backdrop, where do Plymouth's students stand?

Two items are of immediate interest to most faculty and the public--SAT scores and class rank. SAT scores are used as a predictor of success in college; the exact weight given to such evidence varies from college to college, but most admissions officers admit that they see the scores as one valuable piece of information about applicants. When we look at the scores of Plymouth's students, it is important to remember that in some cases the scores of two year students, especially those in General Studies, are included; only recently has it been possible to extract the scores of these students to provide a clearer picture of the performance of four year students. For example, the scores of the class of 1980--entered fall 1976--looked like this:

Class	Res. Verbal	Res. Mean %ile Math	N-r Verbal	N-r Mean %ile Math	Aggregate Verbal	Aggregate Mean Math
1980[1]	406	442	427	477	414	456
1980[2]	336	369	495	585	340	375
1980[3]	395	431	428	478	406	447
1975[4]	451	486	486	534	460	498
1970					475	501

[1] reflects scores minus those of General Studies students

[2] reflects scores of General Studies students only

[3] reflects combined scores of 4-year and General Studies students

[4] no breakdown is available other than totals

See Table 5 in " . . . Comparative Analysis" at end of this report for the national SAT averages.

It is evident from the previous figures that Plymouth has experienced a fairly substantial drop in the SAT scores of its applicants. At the moment we do not have any hard data which will let us know how colleges of a similar size throughout the nation are faring in this respect. Placing the blame for the drop in scores is consuming a good deal of energy and funds nationwide, but no specific answers are available yet. Although the drop in the scores is certainly not promising, researchers are not yet ready to concede that the situation is as desperate as some people would believe. Admittedly, though, admissions officers are treating the SAT scores with considerable caution and are looking for additional proof of students' capabilities.

Class Rank

Another factor used in determining qualifications of students is that of class rank. Most schools assign class rank on the basis of grades; some schools weight their ratings according to the kind of curriculum a student follows in secondary school. Traditionally, Plymouth's students have fallen into the 2nd and 3rd quarter of their classes. A comparative distribution of the rankings for the class of 1970 and the class of 1980 looks like the following:

Class	1st. qtr.	%	2nd qtr.	%	3rd qtr.	%	4th qtr.	%	No Rank	%
1980[1]	183	25.0	257	36.0	174	24.0	26	4.0	69	9.0
1980[2]	2	2.0	4	4.0	33	33.0	49	49.0	11	11.0
1970	153	34.0	236	53.0	53	12.0	2	0.5		

[1] Rankings of all entering students except General Studies

[2] Rankings of General Studies students only

It should be noted that there were no General Studies students in the class of 1970; the term "no rank" simply means that students came from schools where no ranking was used. A complete breakdown of class standings from the class of 1970 to the class of 1980 is available in Table 4 at the end of this report.

Applicant Pool

A truism might be that a college is only as good as the pool of applicants it attracts. Recruiting students is a highly competitive business among all institutions of higher learning. "The Sell" is more and more necessary to attract qualified students. The college which assumes that qualified students will come flocking to its classrooms is a college that can look forward to a limited life; hence even your prestigious Ivy League schools spend a great deal of time in recruitment.

Within the constraints placed upon them by legislative action, budgets and time, Plymouth's admission people spend considerable time on recruitment activity (see p. 13 of this report). Their efforts are directed toward building an applicant pool from which may be drawn a well qualified group of students. The pool from which Plymouth draws stabilized from 1974-1976, but experienced an increase in 1976-1977 as shown below:

Year	Freshmen		Transfers		Re-admits		Total Applicant Pool
	Res.	N-r	Res.	N-r	Res.	N-r	
1976-1977	865	875	145	167	63	16	2131
1975-1976	730	775	108	175	56	20	1864
1974-1975	720	749	119	143	75	21	1827

Increases in applications may occur as a result of changes in admissions at other state institutions--notably Durham--new programs that focus on applicants' needs, changes in societal trends or favorable tuition rates and increased financial aid. None of these items, however, will guarantee that students will make Plymouth or any other college a "first choice." For this reason, changes in admission standards, increases or decreases in enrollment to control quality, etc., must be viewed within the total context of the college's mission and commitments rather than as an isolated ideal.

Denials/Enrollments

With a limited pool of applicants, the question of denials and enrollments becomes crucial. Decisions in this area are based on the flow of applications, the target quotas, the in-state/out-of-state ratios and the available seats in various programs.

In an effort to determine what the picture of denials was, a study was made of the record for the in-coming class for the Fall of 1976. The results may be seen on the following page. One can see from studying the various disciplines that the liberal arts programs are low in terms of applications and rejections. This is not surprising when we consider the present focus on career goals by students and vocational pressures from society. As further explanation of this, one has only to look at the ratios in the various business majors. One other area that is worth noting is that of Physical Education. Due to facilities and staff, that program has had a cap for some time; allowing for attrition, the admissions people

attempt to maintain a cap of 50 men and 50 women in that department. In two year programs, with the exception of the General Studies and Applied Secretarial Science, none seem to be attracting overwhelming numbers.

It should be noted that because of the reporting method used by the University System, Plymouth appears to have an extremely low denial rate. No breakdown is given to show that the denial rate is comparable to that of other institutions in the system. For example, in 1976-1977, published figures show that Plymouth denied only three students; what does not appear is that 123 in-state students were denied admission to four year programs; these same 123 were offered an opportunity to enroll in the two year General Studies program and the majority of them chose to do so; hence the low denial rate. In the future, published figures will make such distinctions.

Breakdown of Applicant Pool by Major

Major	Applied Res.	Applied N-r	Denied Res.	Denied N-r	Total Enrolled
Biology--LA	27	34	0	3	29
Bio. Sci.	5	5	0	1	1
Bus. Ad. Accounting	59	58	0	10	62
Bus. Ad. Undecl.	47	65	0	24	51
Bus. Ad. Marketing	9	38	1	17	14
Bus. Ad. Management	55	70	0	20	63
Secretarial Science	7	7	0	2	8
Elem. Edu. Undecl.	32	40	0	11	30
Elem. Edu. K-6	23	25	0	5	25
Elem. Edu. MS	1	1	0	0	2
Elem. Educ. EC	16	16	0	4	14
Phys. Ed.--Men	57	78	0	28	51
Phys. Ed.--Women	41	106	0	26	57
Accounting Bus.	2	3	0	1	4
Comprehensive Bus.	4	3	0	0	7
Secretarial Bus.	3	2	0	1	1
Art	18	16	0	6	19
Art--LA	22	20	0	6	18
Music	17	16	0	2	19
Music--LA	8	7	0	1	4
Foreign Lang.	4	1	0	0	2
French	3	2	0	0	4
French--LA	3	1	0	0	4
Spanish--LA	1	4	0	0	2
English--LA	8	17	0	3	11
English	10	6	0	1	9
Philosophy	2	1	0	2	0
Mathematics	8	1	0	0	1
Math--LA	6	5	0	1	4
Physical Science	2	0	0	0	1
Psychology--LA	26	32	2	11	20
Social Science	27	16	0	5	8
Anthr./Soc.	2	9	0	5	1
Geography	0	1	0	0	0
Public Management	1	2	0	1	1
History--LA	16	26	0	8	16
Interdiscpl.--BA	5	7	0	1	6
Undecl. LA	76	88	0	28	46
Ap. Bus. Management	31	14	0	7	22
Ap. Bus. Real Est.	0	2	0	1	0
Ap. Bus. Accounting	20	3	0	1	16
Ap. Bus. Marketing	8	4	0	2	8
Ap. Sec. Sci.	43	8	0	2	37
Bio. Lab. Sci.	9	1	0	0	7
General Studies	122	9	0	4	100
Public Service	1	2	0	0	2
	865	875	3	251	804

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE SYSTEM AND THE ADMISSIONS PICTURE

Durham

In 1976-1977, several areas of concern are immediately apparent when one looks at the overall admissions picture of the UNH System. The recent change in the in-state, out-of-state ratio at the Durham campus is one such concern. The change, made at the request of the Durham campus, establishes as a quota the ratio of 25 per cent of the student body coming from out-of-state and 75 per cent coming from in-state. This ratio would be effective with the incoming freshman class of 1977. A freeze on increasing the size of the student body at Durham has also been declared.

Although theoretically the 75/25 ratio has been in effect throughout the System for some time (see RSA 187:31 for exact legislative wording), it has been consistently waived. Now, however, Durham, in an effort to up-grade its admission standards, has declared that it will follow the ratio very closely. This determination, though, is predicated upon Durham's obtaining sufficient funds from the state to underwrite the cost of the marked increase in in-state students. Because out-of-state students "pay their own way," the drop in revenue for Durham is expected to be substantial. Unless the state agrees to make up the difference--and that appears highly unlikely at this point--Durham will be forced to waive the ratio and go back to seeking revenue from a higher percentage of out-of-state students. For example, in 1976-1977, Durham admitted 696 out-of-state students to provide an approximate ratio of 67/33.

Keene

At Keene, admissions figures show another picture. Keene is well over the standard 75/25 ratio in its present freshman class. The reasons given for this high percentage of out-of-state students is that budget projections were not met in the past few years and to "bail out" of a very tight fiscal situation, Keene had to draw more heavily upon its out-of-state student applicant pool. Systems officers, however, believe Keene will have to scale this percentage down rather quickly or subject themselves to questioning and scrutiny from the Legislature. It was this very kind of situation which historically caused the enactment of the ratio in the first place. Keene's ratios for the past three years have been as follows:

1974 - 1975	53/47
1975 - 1976:	55/45
1976 - 1977:	57/43

In 1976-1977, Keene denied 115 in-state residents, a jump of over 75% for the previous year. However, it should be noted that over one-half of these denials were for the nursing program at Keene which operates with a "cap". Nevertheless, since philosophically and traditionally the University System is committed to providing higher education opportunities for all qualified New Hampshire residents, the sudden increase may be suspect in the eyes of the public.

MVB

Another consideration is the still unknown impact that the development of the Merrimack Valley Branch in Manchester may have upon the System, and, more specifically, Plymouth. The growth plan at MVB presently calls for a commuter population, but a percentage of that population may well be a part of a potential Plymouth audience; exactly how large a percentage is not known at this time, but if present enrollment figures are any indication, Plymouth usually draws a fair number of its students from the Manchester area. In looking at enrollment figures for MVB, one must keep in mind that it computes admissions differently from the rest of the System; students at MVB are admitted on a year round continuing basis, not on a semester basis.

Plymouth

The overall effects of this picture are that Plymouth may expect to reap a few short range increases in its applications. For example, in-state applications were up 135 for 1976-1977 as compared with the increase of 10 between 1974-1975 and 1975-1976. This increase could be a possible effect from the dramatic increase in denials at Durham for 1976-1977--543 students as compared with 267 in 1975-1976. It is not expected that such an increase can be counted upon, however, if Durham must stay within its new ratio.

Traditionally the New Hampshire University System has taken care of 20 per cent of the graduating New Hampshire secondary school population with the following division among campuses:

Durham	12%
Keene	4%
Plymouth	4%

It is not expected that these proportions will change in the immediate future.

The result of these concerns is that Plymouth must remain alert to any variations in the admissions picture throughout the System and plan flexibly enough to be ready to take advantage of possible increases or decreases in the in-state applicant pool. The entering class of fall 1976-1977 showed a ratio of 67/33 when enrolled; this compares to a 58/42 ratio of enrolled students in 1975-1976 and a 59/41 ratio of enrolled students in 1974-1975. These figures show that Plymouth has, contrary to popular belief, been enrolling a high percentage of out-of-state students. To increase this percentage any more would undoubtedly invite the New Hampshire Legislature's scrutiny. As the ratio for 1976-1977 shows, attempts have been made to bring the proportions down to a level more in keeping with Durham's ratio. Whether Plymouth will be able to maintain this proportion any better than Durham depends quite heavily on budget appropriations for the next biennium.

Keene, Plymouth and the Merrimack Valley Branch have been singled out by the chancellor of the University System for special attention in an effort to make them "First-Choice institutions for New Hampshire students." Applications from New Hampshire students who want to attend Durham have increased 24 per cent in the past two years. This increase suggests that if the Durham campus adheres to its major constraint of "dynamic equilibrium" (see Chancellor Poulton's remarks in "For & About People of the University System," January 19, 1977, p. 2), then the other three institutions might expect an increased in-state applicant pool with the result that the in-state/out-of-state ratio could change dramatically. Research reveals that 85% of students applying to colleges and universities actually are admitted to their first choice. To achieve Chancellor Poulton's goal, then, considerable research will be needed to determine exactly what will make Plymouth a "first-choice" for an increased number of students and whether that increase is a desirable one.

THE METHOD OF ADMISSION AT PLYMOUTH STATE COLLEGE

For a great many years, Plymouth has used what is termed "rolling admissions". Briefly defined, this procedure involves accepting qualified students on a "first come, first served" basis. This means that in most cases a student applying in November of 1976 will know in a relatively short time whether he has been accepted at Plymouth for the academic year 1977-1978, rather than waiting six months for a decision.

Several factors make this procedure advantageous. First, research has shown that students traditionally go to the college that accepts them first. Second, having a clear picture of the number of in-coming students helps the college prepare for any adjustments in programs and total enrollment that may be necessary. These changes can be made while the applicant pool is still large so that if ratios must be changed in order to meet financial obligations, such an action can be taken with a minimum of difficulty. Plymouth does not close its admissions until May 1 and has, on occasion, extended the date for closing.

Another approach to handling admissions is through the "candidate's reply date". This approach is commonly used in the Ivy League schools or where a large applicant pool can be consistently expected. In this case, all admissions are held until a specified date, usually sometime in April. At that time, a final evaluation of the total pool is done and then formal notification of acceptance is mailed to students.

The advantages of this approach focus primarily on being able to review all applicants and then select the ones with the best credentials. This process, however, relies heavily on a demand for the college and its offerings, a large and well qualified applicant pool, and a substantially funded institution. The high demand for the institution means that the admissions office can fill seats left vacant by students who have decided to go elsewhere and not encounter problems with meeting certain quotas.

At the moment Plymouth does not enjoy the luxury of an extensive applicant pool. This situation could change in the next few years if ways are found to convince more students to make Plymouth a "first choice" institution. Until that happens, however, it does not seem advantageous or realistic to move toward an imitation of the Ivy League procedure. Since PSC admissions remain open until well past the time when most students have selected the college of their choice, it is unlikely that any highly qualified candidate from in-state or out-of-state would be denied admission except on the basis of space.

MEASURES USED FOR DETERMINING ADMISSIONS AT PLYMOUTH STATE COLLEGE

General Admission Measures

At the present time the following items are used in making a decision about an applicant's potential for success in college and suitability for admission.

1. Academic performance
   a. Grade point average
   b. Courses taken
   c. Academic environment

2. Objective tests
   a. SAT or ACT scores
   b. IQ scores
   c. Other aptitude/achievement measures when available

3. Recommendations
   a. Guidance counselors
   b. Teachers
   c. Administrators

4. Personal background
   a. Activities--extra-curricular, civic
   b. Experiences--work, travel

5. Interview
   (used either upon request or when above materials are insufficient for a decision to be made)

Based upon research done on admissions procedures throughout the country, and upon applicant performance in colleges after admission, it has been found that the high school record--including grades, courses taken, and class rank--is the most useful device in predicting success; SAT or ACT scores are half again as useful.

Class rank is usually figured on the basis of grade point average and sometimes the academic program followed. Some high schools weight their class rankings to differentiate among courses of study while others do not; and still other schools do not rank their students at all. However, in determining admissions, class rank is definitely an important factor. The majority of Plymouth's students are ranked in the second or third quarters of their classes. Table 4 at the end of this report shows the class rankings of admitted students for past years.

Measures for Two Year Programs

With the exception of the two year General Studies student, all two year students must meet exactly the same entrance criteria as the four year student.

The two year General Studies student must have a high school diploma or its equivalent, or two years of high school work and evidence of ability to do college level work as exhibited in aptitude measures. In 1972 when approving the General Studies program, the Plymouth faculty stated that the program was to be used for those students who were recommended by their high schools or who could present evidence of their ability to contribute to or profit from the program.

In creating the two year program, the faculty did not stipulate different curricula achievement levels or different curricula for two year students except in the General Studies program. Students enrolling in any two year program at Plymouth do not take courses specifically created just for their program. As a result, all students in the two year programs except for the General Studies actually start at what is considered the third year level of a four year program. Consequently, students admitted to such programs should possess the same qualifications as those admitted for four year programs.

The General Studies program has been offered to New Hampshire students who applied to the four year programs and were denied. A number of students have elected to take this approach in the hope of proving themselves so they might be admitted later to a four year program.

TWO YEAR STUDENTS AND PROGRAMS--SOME CONSIDERATIONS

In 1972, the Plymouth faculty voted to implement the two year degree programs, including the General Studies program. Since that time, several two year programs have been added and Plymouth now offers five associate degree programs with several options/concentrations within some of these. The programs and their options are as follows:

Applied Business Management
(areas of emphasis: management, accounting, marketing, real estate)

Applied Secretarial Science

Biological Laboratory Science

General Studies
(option: Behavior Management)

Public Service

Enrollment figures for these programs vs. four year programs are given below. These figures reflect total enrollments in a given year, not admissions (see p. 5 for an example of admission figures in two year programs). The total number of students given below does not reflect part-time students or full-time graduate students.

Year	2 year programs	Gen. Studies	4 year	Total
Fall 1976	146	137	2281	2568
Fall 1975	113	85	2330	2528
Fall 1974	83	48	2320	2451
Fall 1973	56	20	2343	2419

Academic Performance

Some concern has been expressed by faculty that the performance of two year students may be "watering down" the overall academic standards of the college. This concern seems to be centered on the possible shifting of two year degree people in large numbers into four year degree programs.

Evidence suggests that such large scale shifts are more myth than fact. A study of forms submitted by two year students for permission to change from a two year degree program into a four year one revealed the following information.

Year	Original Program	to	Four Year Program	
1974-1975	General Studies		9 students	
	Assoc. Science		12 students	
1975-1976	General Studies		11 students	
	Assoc. Science		23 students	
1976-1977*	General Studies		6 students	*figures only cover
	Assoc. Science		8	up to Dec. 1976

Total number of students changing majors since 1974: 69
General Studies 26
Assoc. Science 43

The figures above show that the percentage of students changing to four year programs from General Studies is small. Part of this may be attributed to the fact that General Studies students must have 2.0 GPA before they may transfer into a four year program. There is no such restriction on students who enroll in any other Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree program; as long as they meet the same requirements as four year students, they may transfer into a four year program at any time.

Contrary to popular belief, then, the two year program students do not appear to be transferring in large numbers and in the case of the General Studies students, at least, they must maintain a minimum of 2.0 before making a change. A recent study of the GPA of General Studies students who transferred into four year programs showed an average GPA of 2.40.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

Activities

The present staff of the Admissions Office consists of a full-time director and an associate director. In efforts to recruit students for Plymouth State College, the following activities are used:

1. Annual visits to every high school in New Hampshire
   (These visits are announced in advance and include talks with guidance personnel and all interested students.)

2. Distribution of the following:
   a. Viewbook--provides pertinent information about the college and invites inquiries about admissions
   b. Departmental brochures
   c. Catalogues upon request

3. Travel to high schools and appropriate meetings in all New England states as well as such locations as Long Island and New York City

4. Participation on a Systems basis in ten regional college fairs

5. Participation on a Systems basis in New Hampshire guidance counselor workshops held on various System campuses

6. Participation on a Systems basis in national college fairs held in such locations as New York City

7. Participation in New Hampshire Consortium recruitment efforts:
   a. Publication of article on opportunities for higher education within the Consortium--New Hampshire Profiles audience of 100,000
   b. Participation in student search and follow-up mailing of Profiles article to all students falling within identified student pool characteristics
   c. Participation in sponsoring week long tours of Consortium colleges by out-of-state guidance counselors

8. Sponsoring of High School Visitation Days--4 each fall

9. Cooperation with other System admission offices

Staff Activity

The amount of time spent by the director and associate director in recruitment activities can be shown as follows:

Associate Director	Pure recruitment (on the road, visitation)	50%
	Related recruitment activity (interviews, review of applicants' files)	25%
	Administrative (records, studies)	25%
Director	Pure recruitment	15-20%
	Related recruitment activity	30-35%
	Administrative	50%

PREDICTION OF ENROLLMENT FIGURES/QUOTAS

Historically the establishment of enrollment figures has been done in a variety of ways. Before the implementation of the new governance system in 1976, the Long Range Planning Committee or Campus Planning Committee had performed this task. In doing so, the committee used the following factors to make its predictions:

a. Year to year enrollments over the past five years
b. Projected population from New Hampshire high schools
c. Building use and availability of facilities
d. Budget projections/commitments
e. Faculty additions
f. System academic plan
g. Societal trends and influences
h. Student aid availability
i. Curriculum development
j. Town/gown relationships

At least two distinct philosophies exist about enrollment projections. One philosophy favors the linear approach, charting expansion by a fixed percentage growth factor. Such an approach results in neat tables but does not allow for sudden or unusual demands in specific programs or sudden changes in societal concerns regarding higher education. The second philosophy favors using a modified linear projection which allows more of the factors listed above to be considered and a certain built-in flexibility to be maintained.

An example of this philosophic variance can be seen by studying the original enrollment projections from the Long Range Planning Committee that were submitted in 1970-1971, and then the revised ones which are presently a part of the System academic plan. The marked decrease in the revised enrollment projections can be attributed to several factors: potential student applicant pool, tightened budgetary considerations, satisfactory level of plant use, and restrictions on addition of faculty and staff. See Appendices A and B for the comparison. Appendix C shows the projected growth rate of the New Hampshire high school population.

In spite of the use of projections, constant year to year up-dating is required, but massive changes in enrollment projections are difficult to make within a biennium due to the system of funding presently used in New Hampshire.

With the implementation of the new governance system, no provision was made to retain the committee named above. The Budget Committee was charged with the original committee's task. Although enrollment figures are definitely a factor in budget considerations, and vice versa, the task of determining long range enrollment figures and quotas would be better served if done by a separate Long Range Planning Committee which would be charged with recommending priorities and direction for the entire campus.

THE QUESTION OF RETENTION

A factor often overlooked in the admissions picture is that of retention. Concentration upon admitting students and fulfilling quotas does not always take into account the effects of the college and its curricula upon entering students.

For several years, Plymouth has been experiencing a fairly substantial number of withdrawals in both four year and two year programs. The high turn-over rate can be translated into the admissions picture by the number of transfers and re-admissions that often have to be admitted in the second semester of each year, as well as the effect such turn-over has on year to year projections for total enrollment and for recruitment.

Analyzing the reasons for withdrawal is difficult because often a student is under considerable pressure and may wish to avoid discussing or indicating the true reasons for departing from the institution. Nevertheless, certain factors are cited frequently enough in withdrawal surveys conducted by the Office of Student Personnel to warrant attention.

Population

In the Institutional Planning Survey (IPS, June 9, 1976) from the Office of Student Personnel, the following withdrawal population characteristics were cited:

> Fifty-six per cent of the students withdrawing from college were freshmen and 32 per cent were sophomores; only 11 per cent of those withdrawing were upper division students, i.e., Juniors 8 per cent, and Seniors, 3 per cent. .....Almost half of the withdrawing students, i.e., 48 per cent, were out-of-state students paying non-resident tuition. (p.2)

Financial

Twenty per cent of the responding students in the IPS indicated they expected a break in their studies due to financial problems; exactly 20 per cent of the students actually withdrawing cited financial difficulties as their reason. The IPS findings suggested that middle income students and those who were unable to obtain financial assistance withdrew more frequently than others. Data indicating parental income for withdrawing students also supported this finding. (p. 3)

Academic/Vocational

Only 46 per cent of the withdrawals indicated that their academic expectations were being fulfilled at Plymouth; however, 67 per cent noted that they were satisfied that original expectations about faculty had been fulfilled. Nevertheless, 42 per cent of the withdrawals felt that the academic standards were too low.

Individual students participating in the IPS had strong feelings about the question of "...whether or not the college curriculum should be more vocationally oriented." Written comments were used as a basis for determining what students' views were on the issue; 50 per cent were satisfied with the status quo and 50 per cent were not. No specific breakdown was available for responses on this question by withdrawing students.

Transfer

Considerable movement from campus to campus is characteristic of today's student population. At Plymouth the situation is no different. A substantial number of students entering Plymouth have expectations of transferring to some other institution; 42 per cent of the IPS respondents said they expected to transfer while 20 per cent said they did not. Seventy-five per cent of the withdrawals indicate that they are transferring to another college. (p.3)

Expectations

Throughout the country retention is beginning to emerge as a key factor in admissions. This means that more attention must be given to thinking of the in-coming student not as a freshman but as a graduate-to-be. A study of the literature on retention and attrition reveals four key factors concerning student expectations and reasons for withdrawal.

1. Isolation--feeling of being lost on campus, no sense of identity
2. Depression--the feeling of "I can't do it," or "I can't make it."
3. Academic Boredom--courses overlap with high school offerings
4. Uninspired teaching

Although it may be felt that not all of the elements above are present at Plymouth, little evidence exists to suggest otherwise. As a means for developing some form of retention model, the following areas are useful:

1. Assessment of the attitude of the entire campus, from the president to the serving line
2. Identification of specific obstacles that are discouraging students and designing ways to remove such obstacles
3. Development of a more sophisticated data base on all in-coming students so that more can be determined about them in terms of their wants, needs, and aspirations in order to get students started right
4. Development of a data flow system; specific information about students in terms of skills levels, background etc., needs to be distributed to the people who can use such data in order to help students.

When Plymouth loses in two years almost the same number of students as it brings in during one year, the time is here to begin exploring some of the ways to reverse that trend.

SUMMARY

The Admissions Policy Committee views its work as having only begun with this report. It does not feel at this time that it can recommend major changes in admissions policy until further study and research are done. The focus of this research and study will be upon the following areas:

1. Ways of increasing the applicant pool
   a. methods of involving alumni and faculty in recruitment
   b. identifying more special interest areas and relating college offerings to those areas
   c. scholarship aid

2. The long range effects of "caps" on academic programs; establishment of guidelines for making such "caps."

3. Effects of admission quotas and procedures on particular academic programs

4. A study of the qualifications of rejected students to determine effectiveness of present admission requirements

5. Continuous monitoring of the admissions picture in the University System

6. A study of the admissions situation and practices at schools of comparable size and mission

7. Ways of decreasing the withdrawal rate

8. An examination of the characteristics and performance of transfer students and re-admissions to determine impact upon the applicant pool

9. Cooperation with Long Range Planning Committee in establishing growth rates

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon its study thus far, the Admissions Policy Committee makes the following recommendations which are designed to clarify the admissions situation at Plymouth:

1. That records be kept by the Registrar to chart the shifting of two year students into four year programs and that an annual summary of this shifting be made to the faculty by the Associate Dean of Instruction.

2. That a report be made to the faculty as soon as possible by the Academic Standards Committee regarding the overall performance of two year students compared with that of four year students and that special attention be given to the academic performance of General Studies students.

3. That the Academic Standards Committee regularly review and make recommendations with regard to student attrition.

4. That the Curriculum Committee in consultation with the Director of Continuing Education undertake a review of the two year program requirements, particularly those in General Studies, to determine whether curricular offerings are meeting the needs of the two year student population. Results of this review are to be presented to the faculty at the earliest possible date.

5. That the Director of Admissions be made an ex officio member of the Resource and Planning Committee.

6. That annually a statistical analysis of the in-coming freshman class be made available by the Director of Admissions to all faculty at the first faculty meeting in the fall.

7. That the existing policy be continued which requires two year General Studies students to have a 2.0 cumulative average before transferring into another program.

CLASS OF 1980 STATISTICS AND

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

TABLES 1 - 6

1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980

The "Class of 1980 Statistics and Comparative Analysis" is produced by the Admissions Office. Its purpose is to provide a statistical picture of freshman admissions over a ten-year period and the freshman class which enrolled this past September, the class of 1980.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 report data on applications received for the freshman class and the actions taken on the application. Note that Table 1 deals with freshmen applications from New Hampshire residents, Table 2 with freshman applications from non-residents, and Table 3 combines data for residents and non-residents from Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 indicates a surprisingly constant applicant pool during the previous four years and a sharp increase this year (class of 1980). The increase is, to a great degree, due to the change in admission policies at the University of New Hampshire. Also interesting is the constant percent of the total applications enrolled over the past five years.

Table 2 shows the largest out-of-state applicant pool in our history. It is also significant that we had the lowest "Percent of Admitted Applicants Enrolled" (43%) in our history.

Table 4 shows the class rankings of our freshmen to be quite constant over the ten-year period. This year is the first time we have been able to break out the two-year General Studies students and the resulting effect is obvious.

Table 5 is included in an attempt to give more meaning to the data in Table 6. Again the effects of the General Studies group on the aggregate statistics is obvious. SAT score decline is not a concern unique to PSC. A "blue ribbon" commission headed by Willard Wirtz is to report on two years of research sometime this year.

TABLE 1

NEW HAMPSHIRE RESIDENTS

Class	Total Apps	Total Admitted	Percent of Total Apps Admitted	Withdrew	Total Enrolled	Percent of Admitted Enrolled	Percent of Total Apps Enrolled	Denied	Percent of Total Apps Denied
1971	601	529	88%	170	359	68%	58%	24	4%
1972	753	598	79%	196	402	67%	53%	108	14%
1973	887	737	83%	222	515	69%	58%	150	17%
1974	858	741	86%	260	481	65%	56%	117	14%
1975	908	744	82%	231	513	68%	56%	164	18%
1976	748	719	96%	241	478	66%	63%	29	4%
1977	729	728	99%	262	466	68%	64%	1	-1%
1978	720	718	99%	256	453	63%	63%	2	-1%
1979	730	725	99%	241	473	65%	65%	5	-1%
1980	865	862*	99%	309*	537	62%	62%	3	-1%

*Includes 64 who withdrew before admission

TABLE 2

NON-RESIDENTS

Class	Total Apps	Total Admitted	Percent of Total Apps Admitted	Withdrew	Total Enrolled	Percent of Admitted Enrolled	Percent of Total Apps Enrolled	Denied	Percent of Total Apps Denied
1971	355	218	61%	104	114	48%	32%	117	33%
1972	427	212	50%	97	115	54%	27%	211	49%
1973	592	342	58%	161	181	53%	31%	250	42%
1974	711	313	46%	170	143	45%	20%	398	54%
1975	818	328	40%	169	159	48%	20%	490	60%
1976	595	452	76%	213	239	53%	40%	143	24%
1977	706	480	68%	230	250	52%	35%	226	32%
1978	749	620	82%	311	307	50%	41%	129	17%
1979	775	669	86%	329	332	50%	43%	106	14%
1980	875	624*	71%	342*	271	43%	31%	251	29%

*Includes 52 who withdrew before admission

TABLE 3

TOTALS

(In-State & Out-of-State)

Class	Total Apps	Total Admitted	Percent of Total Apps Admitted	Withdrew	Total Enrolled	Percent of Admitted Enrolled	Percent of Total Apps Enrolled	Denied	Percent of Total Apps Denied
1971	956	747	78%	274	473	63%	50%	141	15%
1972	1200	810	67%	293	517	63%	43%	319	27%
1973	1479	1079	74%	383	696	64%	46%	400	26%
1974	1569	1054	67%	430	624	59%	39%	515	33%
1975	1726	1072	62%	400	672	62%	39%	654	38%
1976	1343	1171	87%	454	717	61%	53%	172	13%
1977	1435	1208	84%	492	716	59%	50%	227	16%
1978	1469	1338	90%	567	760	57%	52%	131	9%
1979	1505	1394	93%	570	805	57%	53%	111	7%
1980	1740	1486*	85%	651*	808	54%	47%	254	15%

*Includes 116 who withdrew before admission

TABLE 4

HIGH SCHOOL CLASS STANDING

Class	1st Qtr.	%	2nd Qtr.	%	3rd Qtr.	%	4th Qtr.	%	No Rank	%
1980	185	23.0	261	32.0	205	25.0	75	9.0	80	10.0
1979	169	21.0	260	32.0	216	26.0	81	10.0	92	11.0
1978	175	25.0	281	41.0	174	25.0	59	9.0	-	-
1977	197	27.0	216	30.0	156	21.0	67	9.0	-	-
1976	215	31.0	239	34.5	173	25.0	65	9.3	-	-
1975	249	38.4	263	40.6	112	17.3	23	3.5	-	-
1974	194	31.2	280	45.0	130	20.9	17	2.7	-	-
1973	222	32.0	324	47.0	126	18.0	24	3.0	-	-
1972	149	30.0	221	44.0	106	21.0	26	5.0	-	-
1971	151	32.0	195	41.0	111	23.0	17	4.0	-	-
*1980	183	25.0	257	36.0	174	24.0	26	4.0	69	9.0
**1980	2	2.0	4	4.0	33	33.0	49	49.0	11	11.0

*Minus General Studies Students
**Only General Studies Students

TABLE 5

NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) SCORE AVERAGES

FOR THE TESTING YEARS 1966-67 THROUGH 1975-76

College Class Year	Verbal	Mathematical
1971	466	492
1972	466	492
1973	463	493
1974	460	488
1975	455	488
1976	453	484
1977	445	481
1978	444	480
1979	434	472
1980	431	472

This table is a report of national data on average Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for college-bound, secondary school seniors over the past ten years. It is included, courtesy of the College Entrance Examination Board, in order to illustrate the national trend toward lower SAT results. One explanation for this decline is that the development of community colleges and "open admissions" programs has extended and changed the population taking the SAT. An additional factor is that the number of students who take the SAT as juniors and choose to repeat it as seniors has declined. The College Board estimates that juniors who repeat the SAT in the senior year tend to average 15 points higher.

TABLE 6

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS - SAT

Class	Resident Verbal	Mean %ile Math	Non-Resident Verbal	Mean %ile Math	Aggregate Verbal	Mean %ile Math
1980	395	431	428	478	406	447
1979	401	435	424	474	411	453
1978	418	450	438	474	427	460
1977	417	452	451	497	429	468
1976	436	461	458	501	443	475
1975	451	486	486	534	460	498
1974	-	-	-	-	453	491
1973	-	-	-	-	460	490
1972	-	-	-	-	453	489
1971	-	-	-	-	442	474
*1980	406	442	427	477	414	456
**1980	336	369	495	585	340	375

*Minus General Studies Students
**Only General Studies Students

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM ENROLLMENT FORECAST

DEGREE CANDIDATES - HEADCOUNT - SEMESTER I***

YEAR	U.N.H.	K.S.C.	P.S.C.	M.V.B.*	S.O.C.S.**	SYSTEM
73-74	9,550	2,551	2,450	138	65	14,754
74-75	9,877	2,621	2,500	180	285	15,463
75-76	10,197	2,693	2,550	375	400	16,215
76-77	10,435	2,767	2,600	490	510	16,802
77-78	10,450	2,780	2,850	650	610	17,340
78-79	10,475	2,800	3,005	1,080	700	18,060
79-80	10,500	2,825	3,255	1,560	780	18,920
80-81	10,550	2,850	3,325	2,280	850	19,855
81-82	10,600	2,890	3,350	2,520	890	20,250
82-83	10,650	2,950	3,400	2,880	940	20,820

*A majority of the students are and will continue to be part-time ones, particularly in the earlier years of the table. Students enrolled in the (Durham) Thompson School of Applied Science program in Applied Business Management are included in the U.N.H. rather than the M.V.B. counts.

**A majority of the students are and will continue to be part-time ones.

***The figures in this forecast were supplied in 1970.

APPENDIX B

PROJECTED UNIVERSITY SYSTEM ENROLLMENTS

ENROLLED DEGREE CANDIDATES - HEADCOUNT

FALL SEMESTER

Note: The enrollments projected below for the next four years are equal to or less than the maximum guidelines established by the Board of Trustees in 1971.

It was intended that a new six-year projection study would be conducted during 1975-76; however, there was an unexpected and sizeable increase in admissions applications for the fall of 1976, and it was decided to attempt to determine the cause, and monitor the effect before proceeding. The projection study will be undertaken in the fall and is to be completed before January 1, 1977.

Enrollment projections for the School of Continuing Studies have not been included since it has a "rolling" admission procedure and its population is composed primarily of adult learners rather than recent high-school graduates.

Year	Durham	Keene	Plymouth	Merrimack	Total
70-71	8837	2014	2030	46	12927
71-72	8984	2288	2263	110	13645
72-73	9424	2275	2425	133	14257
73-74	9550	2551	2450	138	14689
74-75	9877	2483	2500	157	15017
75-76	10297	2558	2708	232	15773
76-77	10300	2563	2730	495	16088
77-78	10400	2635	2770	650	16155
78-79	10450	2700	2800	780	16730
79-80	10500	2770	2815	900	16985

TABLE II. CONTINUING EDUCATION DEGREE-CREDIT HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT

Year	UNH	KSC	PSC	MVB	SOCS	Total
71-72	1621	390 est	375	1173		3559 est
72-73	1651	339 est	216	995	392	3593 est
73-74	1519	410 est	261	1148	1350	4688 est
74-75	1778	415	261	1050	1391	4895
75-76	1736	547	306	1166	1053	4803
76-77	1770	555	335	1200		
77-78	1810	560	350	1300		
78-79	1840	570	355	1400		
79-80	1880	573	360	1450		

TABLE III TOTAL HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT

SUM OF DEGREE CANDIDATES AND DEGREE CREDIT STUDENTS

Year	UNH	KSC	PSC	MVB	SOCS	Total
71-72	10605	2677 est	2638	1283		17203 est
72-73	11075	2605 est	2641	1128	392	17841 est
73-74	11069	2745 est	2711	1286	1415	19226 est
74-75	11655	2898	2761	1207	1676	20197
75-76	12033	3105	3014	1398	1433	20983
76-77	12070	3265	3065	1690		
77-78	12210	3358	3120	1950		
78-79	12290	3437	3155	2180		
79-80	12380	3493	3175	2350		

APPENDIX C

NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

AS PREDICTED BY
THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ANALYSIS

BASED ON IN-STATE ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY-SCHOOL POPULATIONS
AND BASED ON IN-MIGRATION FACTORS

NOVEMBER 10, 1976

	YEAR		NUMBER		
JUNE	1964		7841		
	1965		9630		
	1966		9432		
	1967		9326		
	1968		9265		
	1969	ACTUAL	9924		
	1970		10074		
	1971		10630		
	1972		10620		
	1973		10666		
	1974		11288		
	1975		12283	INCREASE	20% OF
	1976		12729	OVER 1976	INCREASE
	1977		13202	473	95
	1978	PROJECTED	13358	629	126
	1979		13539	810	162
	1980		13327	598	120
	1981		13914	1185	237